

partial arrangements. " Yet I am firmly convinced that the true line of progress is to proceed from the particular to the general, and not, as has hitherto been embodied in Covenant and Protocol, to reverse the process and attempt to eliminate the particular by the general. A form of guarantee which is so general that we undertake exactly the same obligations in defence, shall I say, of the Polish Corridor (for which no British Government ever will or ever can risk the bones of a British Grenadier) as we extend to those international arrangements or conditions on which, as our history shows, our national existence depends, is a guarantee so wide and general that it carries no conviction whatever and gives no sense of security to those who are concerned in our action. If we are to relieve the tension of Europe in the only way in which it can be done, namely by relieving French fear, a more particular and specific guarantee is in my opinion necessary." A guarantee of the eastern frontiers of France and Belgium, he continued, would be much more practical if Germany joined in it.

In the same speech of March 24 in which the Foreign Secretary explained to Parliament the rejection of the Protocol he outlined the proposals which were to lead to the Locarno Pact. Of the sincerity of the German approach he had no doubt. A bilateral guarantee of the *status quo* in the West and a renunciation of war in the East might banish the threatening atmosphere which had endured ever since the Treaty of Versailles. It was essential to such an agreement that Germany should enter the League and the Council on a footing of equality both of obligations and rights. At Birmingham he spoke even more warmly of the German approach. Europe was racked by fear. Alliances among the friends of yesterday against the enemies of yesterday would merely

perpetuate the
division. We could not give such a guarantee
regarding
every threatened frontier. Isoktion, he further
explained in
the House on June 24, was impossible, and
general commitments extending the Covenant were
undesirable. Here was a
new opportunity, perhaps the last, to free
Europe from the
domination of fear. The German initiative had
received a
most friendly response from France. The plan
caused no one
anxiety, and even the preliminary exchange of
views had eased
the situation. Only if England co-operated
could the plan
on which the peace of the world depended be
brought to
success.

A good deal of discussion was necessary to
settle details,